

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 SNM-05 ISO-00 DEAE-00 L-03 EB-08 TRSE-00
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FM AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1058
INFO HQS US CUSTOMS SVC WASHDC
US CUSTOMS MIAMI
US COAST GUARD MIAMI

UNCLAS TEGUCIGALPA 3576

US CUSTOMS MIAMI FOR MARK BARBAKOFF

E.O. 11652: NA
TAGS: SNAR, HO
SUBJ: RELEASE TO HONDURAS GOVERNMENT OF NARCOTICS TRAFFICKING
VESSELS

1. A NEED EXISTS FOR PROMPT TRANSMISSION TO US CUSTOMS SERVICE (USC), OF STATE DEPARTMENT AUTHORIZATION FOR THE FORMER TO RELEASE TO GOH SEVERAL HONDURAN-FLAG VESSELS IN USC CUSTODY CONSEQUENT TO THEIR DETENTION FOR NARCOTICS TRAFFICKING. THE NEED FOR SUCH AUTHORIZATION IS URGENT DUE TO GOH DESIRE TO MOVE VESSELS TO HONDURAS IN AUGUST PRIOR TO HURRICANE SEASON. THIS AUTHORIZATION PROCEDURE IS SIMILAR TO THAT FOLLOWED BY THE DEPARTMENT IN AUTHORIZING US COAST GUARD TO RELEASE MV JULIANA I IN BOSTON DURING MAY 1978.

2. THE VESSELS FOR WHICH THIS AUTHORIZATION REQUESTED ARE THE YOSURU, SAN RAFAEL, MEIRI AND JOSE GREGORIO. RELEVANT FACTS REGARDING THEIR DETENTION BY US COAST GUARD FOR NARCOTICS TRAFFICKING AND HOLDING FOR RELEASE TO GOH ARE CONTAINED IN EXTENSIVE CABLE TRAFFIC REGARDING THEM DURING PERIOD SEPTEMBER 1977 TO UNCLASSIFIED

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MAY 1978. CITED IN THESE CABLES ARE APPLICABLE LAW REGARDING GOH CONFISCATION AND TRAFFICKING VESSELS.

3. DEPARTMENT REQUESTED TO ADDRESS AUTHORIZATION TO US COMMISSIONER OF CUSTOMS AND DELIVER TO MR. STUART SEIDEL, GENERAL COUNSEL, HEADQUARTERS, US CUSTOM SERVICE, 14TH AND CONSTITUTION AVENUE. IN ORDER TO EXPEDITE TRANSMISSION, MR. SEIDEL

SUGGESTS ACTION OFFICER IN DEPARTMENT CALL HIM ON 566-5476 TO ARRANGE HAND DELIVERY. OTHERWISE SEVERAL DAYS WOULD BE LOST IN TRANSIT. IT ALSO SUGGESTED THAT AUTHORIZATION STATE QUOTE THIS IS TO AUTHORIZE THE COMMISSIONER OF CUSTOMS OR HIS DELEGATE TO RELEASE THE FOLLOWING VESSELS (PER LIST PARA TWO) TO LIEUTENANT CRISTOBAL CANO CULLY OF THE NAVAL FORCES OF HONDURAS UNQUOTE.

4. GENERAL POLICARPO PAZ, COMMANDING GENERAL OF HONDURAS ARMED FORCES HAS PROVIDED LT. CANO WITH FULL DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY TO ACT ON GOH BEHALF IN SATISFYING US REQUIREMENTS FOR RELEASE OF THESE AND OTHER VESSELS, AND TO MAKE NECESSARY REPAIRS AND PREPARATIONS FOR MOVING THEM TO HONDURAS. LT. CANO PLANS TO ARRIVE MIAMI JULY 31 TO INITIATE RELEASE AND PREPARATION OF VESSELS. GOH HAS BEEN HIGHLY RESPONSIVE IN COOPERATING WITH US IN ARRESTING NARCOTICS TRAFFICKING VIA HONDURAS. PROMPT ACTION ON THIS REQUEST WILL HELP TO ASSURE CONTINUING COOPERATION. JARAMILLO

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